



Policy on Off-Site Visits

Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. Most off-site activities serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences and personal development. Some of our visits are for recreational purposes such as holidays or rewards outings. This policy is written strictly in line with the Essex County Council Codes of Practice and DfES Guidance on best practice.

Aims and objectives

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
- provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
- promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

Educational Visits

Most of our visits aim to teach pupils an aspect of the National Curriculum. These visits are funded by parent/carer's voluntary contributions. Where contributions are not forthcoming the event will be cancelled.

Recreational Visits

Children in Year 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential holiday. We charge for board and lodging, insurance and specialist instruction for certain activities. The trip enables children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their holiday. We undertake this visit only with the written agreement of the LA. We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake. Other recreational visits such as rewards outings and outings that do not cover the National Curriculum are optional and must be funded by parents.

How visits may be authorised and assessed for risk

The headteacher will appoint a party leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school.

S/he will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed/collected;
- support the headteacher and governing body in their decisions on approval;
- assign competent staff to lead and help during the outing;
- organise related staff training or briefing for adult helpers to advise on procedures and organisation;
- verify that all accompanying adults, including private car drivers, have had satisfactory police checks & insurance
- ensure the transport company will use vehicles with seat belts
- make sure that specific written consent and medical forms are obtained;
- keep records of visits, and ensure that there are regular generic assessments of the visit
- seek permission from the LEA for residential/foreign and adventurous visits
- ensure the visit is inclusive
- Ensure ratios are 1:10 (Years 4-6) 1:6 (Years 1-3) 1:3 (FS) at least in all cases.

The school's educational visits coordinator, who may be the headteacher, will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits.

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the headteacher before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made.

Charging and Communication with Parents

The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give their specific consent, in writing, before a child can be involved in any off-site activities., except activities in the locality which have already been given permission for on induction.

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary, except in the case of recreational visits). Where contributions are not forthcoming the trip will be cancelled. Should the visit be cancelled by any party or a child cannot attend the visit after payment has been made, the school will only return payment only if it can be retrieved from the receiving party.

The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the headteacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the headteacher the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.